

# **Pakistan: A Conflicted Ally in the Fight Against Terrorism Since 9/11**

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## **Abstract**

Since 9/11, Pakistan has been a conflicted ally on the war on terror. Pakistan has largely cooperated with U.S. efforts to eliminate al Qaeda in Pakistan and its Federally Administered Tribal Areas. However, Pakistan and its Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate have remained strong supporters of militant organizations including the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Haqqani Network, and the Afghan Taliban. Pakistan supports these organizations for its perceived strategic interests. Pakistan's duplicitous game has caused Pakistan to emerge as the epicenter of global terror. Beyond terror, Pakistan suffers from a constant oscillation of government, and declining socio-economic conditions that fuel its instability. Righting nuclear-armed Pakistan's course is necessary to avoid being overrun by militancy and insecurity. To this end, the U.S. must reprioritize its policies with Pakistan. Policy changes must include a consistent commitment to Pakistan, pressing for a democratic government, helping build Pakistan's economy, networking with its military, and ending Pakistan's support of militant groups. The U.S. should also pressure India and Pakistan to the diplomatic table in an attempt to reach peace over the long-disputed Kashmir territory.

**Key Words:** Pakistan, Terrorism, Federally Administered Tribal Area, Safe Haven, Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, India, Kashmir, U.S. Policy, and Nuclear Proliferation

## **Introduction**

Since the terror attacks of 9/11, Pakistan has emerged as a conflicted partner in countering terrorism. Shortly after the terrorist attack that brought down the twin towers, Pakistan emerged as a critical partner in the U.S. action against Al Qaeda and the Taliban (Fair, Crane, Chivvis, Puri, & Spirtas, 2010). Pakistan was uniquely positioned as a geo-strategic link to Afghanistan, and "permitted the United States to use its airspace; granted overland access to Afghanistan; and employed its army, police, and paramilitary organizations to capture al Qaeda activists" (Fair et al., 2010). In exchange for Pakistan's cooperation, the U.S. has provided billions in aid to Pakistan (Fair et al., 2010).

Despite Pakistan's proclaimed commitment of support, and ongoing U.S. aid, Pakistan's security situation has deteriorated (Fair et al., 2010). Paradoxically, Pakistan has become a sponsor of terrorism, rather than a combatant of it (Fair et al., 2010; Riedel, 2011). By one estimate, Bruce Riedel (2009) describes Pakistan as the now "epicenter [and] crucible of terror"

(Riedel, 2009) There are several reasons for Pakistan's decline; and, it is these reasons that are the foci of this analysis. To begin, Pakistan suffers from a schizophrenic government that vacillates between military and civilian control (Fair et al., 2010). Inconsistent governance, combined with the sheer lack of governance in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), has negatively impacted Pakistan's economy, contributed to widespread poverty, and fueled internal insecurity (Fair et al., 2010). While Pakistan has undertaken efforts to eradicate al Qaeda, Pakistan continues to play favor to other militant groups including, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the Haqqani Network, and the Afghan Taliban (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Kagan, 2011*). Emerging evidence suggests Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) operates with impunity, and "continues to fund, train, and give sanctuary to the Afghan Taliban" (Rooney, 2010) as well as the Haqqani Network (Waldman, 2010). And, Pakistan remains obsessed with India as its enemy (Rashid, 2009); and, these two countries have been locked in an ongoing debate over Kashmir since 1947 (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan's obsession has resulted in provocation of India, often via its terror proxy LeT, which has brought the two nuclear-armed countries to the brink of war (Rashid, 2009). Moreover, the perceived threat from India has fueled Pakistan's proliferation of nuclear weapons (Riedel, 2011). Such proliferation, juxtaposed with Pakistan's deteriorating security situation and support of militant groups, is cause for increasing concern among the international community (Rashid, 2009).

### **Pakistan: Past and Present**

According to Fair et al. (2010), "Pakistan has repeatedly failed to promulgate an enduring constitution: It has had five constitutions since independence in 1947." The inability to agree upon a constitution has resulted in sudden and sometimes violent transitions of governmental power (Fair et al., 2010). The competing parties in this enduring power struggle are Pakistan's military and civilian leadership (Fair et al., 2010). Military rule in Pakistan has occurred for more than half of its existence (Fair et al., 2010). And, during those times that civilian leadership was in power the military remained a dominant force in Pakistan's political sphere (Fair et al., 2010). Although the majority of Pakistani's prefer a democratic, civilian led government, achieving such a government cannot occur until the tussle between the civilian-military power structures strike a balance (Fair et al., 2010).

A democratic Pakistan is, unfortunately, not a likely prospect (Fair et al., 2010). As Fair et al. (2010) describe, "it is unlikely that Pakistan's political, military, and bureaucratic elites will be able to agree upon and sustain a working parliamentary democracy as set down in the 1973 constitution." Pakistan's military leadership consistently argues for military rule under a presidential system (Fair et al., 2010). The civilian ruling class promotes a parliamentary democracy (Fair et al., 2010). This tug-of-war between the civil leadership and the military has "oscillated between some variety of one or the other form since independence in 1947" (Fair, et al., 2010).

The inability to achieve democracy is underpinned by the ongoing debate between the military and civilian components within the government (Fair et al., 2010). These debates include, "where the balance of civil-military power should reside; the appropriate role for Islam

in the state; the balance between federal and local power; and whether and how the state should incorporate areas such as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas” (Fair et al., 2010). Even when civilian leadership is in power, as is the current case under President Asif Zardari, the military retains powerful political influence (Fair et al., 2010). Moreover, the military does not yield power to the civilian government (Fair et al., 2010). To illustrate, “When the military has been out of power, it has played a prominent role in government by pressuring the political parties, undermining popularly elected governments by manipulating party rifts, and even creating new political parties to act as their proxies, which the army then helps to prevail at the polls” (Fair et al., 2010).

Pakistan’s social economy is also cause for concern (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan has experienced a boom of its youth population (Fair et al., 2010). Nawaz (2011) describes this as a “demographic ticking time bomb...roughly 60 million youth out of a population of 180 million...are largely illiterate and unemployed” (*Threat to US Homeland*, 2011). This is of particular concern because, “militant organizations may find it easier to recruit high-aptitude young men” (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan also suffers from poor education (Fair et al., 2010). Literacy rates fluctuate by region, but overall remain low (Fair et al., 2010). Infant mortality is also generally high, and is “much higher in rural areas than in urban areas” (Fair et al., 2010). And, preventable diseases are “still a major cause of death in Pakistan” (Fair et al., 2010).

Complicating the governance of Pakistan is its FATA (Gul, 2010). The FATA “are spread over 27,220 kilometers and run in a narrow belt along the 2,340-kilometer border with Afghanistan” (Gul, 2010). The FATA’s population is estimated at over 3 million, and is primarily organized across sixty Pashtun tribes (Gul, 2010). Education is largely non-existent, as evidenced by a “dismally low” literacy rate in this region (Gul, 2010). Social infrastructure is also meager with a lack of adequate medical care, transportation, and limited clean water (Gul, 2010). Furthermore, “Per capita income [in the FATA] is half the national level...60 percent of the population lives below the poverty line” (Fair et al., 2010). Disaffection of the masses is exacerbated by the chasm between the poor and social elite (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). Affluent and powerful Pakistani’s pay little, if any, taxes described by Nawaz (2011) as “unbridled kleptocratic behavior” by the government (*Threat to US Homeland*, 2011).

The FATA “functions as a semi-autonomous region, under special laws designed and implemented by the British in 1901” (Gul, 2010). The FATA “lacks a police force, courts, and other public services” (Fair et al., 2010). The FATA is governed by the Federal Crimes Regulation (FCR) (Gul, 2010). FCR “enshrines several principles – such as collective punishment – that have been ruled unconstitutional by Pakistan’s high court to no avail” (Fair et al., 2010). And, no Pakistani government has attempted to extend its constitution to the FATA (Fair et al., 2010). Failed governance in the FATA region has contributed to Pakistan’s insecurity, because it is an attractive locale for militant groups to acquire a safe haven (Fair et al., 2010; Gul, 2010). This fact is exemplified given the flight of al Qaeda and the Taliban to the FATA following the U.S. launched Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001 (Jones, 2009; Bergen, 2011).

### **Militant Groups and Pakistan’s House of Refuge**

## Pakistan: A Conflicted Ally in the Fight Against Terrorism Since 9/11

According to Nawaz (2011), “Pakistan today is a magnet for terrorists from around the globe” (*Threat to US Homeland*, 2011). Pakistan based terrorist groups include al Qaeda, various Sunni militant groups, the Tehreek e Taliban of Pakistan (TTP), and LeT. According to Jones (2011), “al Qa’ida’s primary command and control structure remains situated in Pakistan” (*Threat to US Homeland*, 2011).

Al Qaeda maintains robust networks and relationships with militant networks in Pakistan’s FATA, including TTP, LeT, and the Haqqani Network (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011). Pakistan has largely cooperated with U.S. efforts to eliminate al Qaeda in its country (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Kagan, 2011). However, al Qaeda remains a global threat (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Jones, 2011). Al Qaeda has also “effectively established a foothold with several tribes or sub-tribes in the [FATA], such as some Ahmadzai Wazirs, Mehsuds, Utmanzai Wazirs, Mohmands, Salarzais, and Zadrans” (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011). In return for sanctuary, al Qaeda provides these groups coordination of “strategic priorities, operational campaigns, and tactics against Western allied forces” (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011); aid in planning “suicide attacks, emplacing improvised explosive devices, and helping to conduct ambushes and raids” (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011); training and improved methods for the dissemination of propaganda (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011); and, financial support (*Threat to US Homeland*, Jones, 2011).

Al Qaeda has also fostered franchises by leveraging Sunni extremists groups in Pakistan (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). These groups include the “Lashkar e Jhangvi, Sipah e Sahaba, and Jaish e Muhammed” (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). Additionally, al Qaeda “has found support from elements in mainstream Islamic parties, including the Jamaat I Islami, some of whose members hid [al Qaeda] targets” (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011).

The TTP was an outgrowth of Pakistani forces in Pakistan’s FATA (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). The TTP is primarily an insurgent movement focused on the overthrow of Pakistan’s government (*Threat to US Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). According to Nawaz (2011), the TTP “now is on the decline, its leadership having been dislocated from the Mehsud heartland of South Waziristan and partially destroyed by the CIA drone attacks” (*Threat to US Homeland*, 2011). Although on the decline, there is evidence to suggest the TTP remains an internal security threat to Pakistan. For example, the TTP is implicated in the assassination of Benzair Bhutto (Woodward, 2010). Additionally, the TTP remains tied to al Qaeda in Pakistan, and has assumed al Qaeda’s charge of suicide bombings within Pakistan (Gul, 2010). The TTP has increasingly recruited young boys to serve as suicide bombers by indoctrinating them with fantastical stories of their immortal, post-detonation existence (Gul, 2010). The TTP may be attempting to regain strength in Pakistan through an alliance with LeT (Riedel, 2011).

There is also evidence the TTP may be expanding its operations beyond Pakistan, and under the Islamist doctrine of global jihad (Woodward, 2010). In May 2010, Faisal Shahzad attempted to detonate an explosive-laden sport utility vehicle in New York’s Times Square (Seale, 2010; Boyd, 2010). The attempt failed due to Shahzad’s ineptitude, and, alert citizens reported the suspicious vehicle to law enforcement (Boyd, 2010). Shahzad was subsequently

identified as the bomber, and was quickly arrested on an aircraft bound for Dubai (Boyd, 2010). Most disturbing about this terror plot is Shahzad was trained in bomb-making by the TTP in Pakistan's FATA (Woodward, 2010). The investigation revealed Shahzad had traveled thirteen times to Pakistan, and had received training to carry out the Times Square attack (Searle, 2010).

LeT "is one of Pakistan's oldest and most powerful militant groups" (*Threat to US Homeland, Tankel, 2011*). LeT is largely secure from Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts for several reasons (*Threat to US Homeland, Tankel, 2011*). First, "Pakistan is facing a serious insurgency and LeT remains one of the few militant outfits whose policy is to refrain from launching attacks against the state" (*Threat to US Homeland, Tankel, 2011*). Second, "the Pakistan army and its powerful [ISI] have long considered LeT to be the country's most reliable proxy against India and the group still provides utility in this regard" (*Threat to US Homeland, Tankel, 2011*). And, "LeT provides social services and relief aid via its above ground wing, Jamaat-ul-Dawaa, and its activities in this sphere have led to a well of support among segments of the populace" (*Threat to US Homeland, Tankel, 2011*).

### **The ISI Wildcard**

According Fair et al. (2010), "While the Pakistan government has repeatedly stated its commitment to U.S. goals in the war on terror or overseas contingency operations, accumulating evidence suggests that the ISI's activities could undermine support for those very goals." There are several reasons to support this claim. First, the ISI has a long history of supporting various militant groups, including the Taliban and LeT (Fair et al, 2010). Second, while the Pakistan Army has oversight of the ISI, the ISI enjoys broad autonomy with little oversight of its operations (Fair et al., 2010). Third, the ISI, "employs human assets with dubious pasts, and uses retired case officers who execute sanctioned programs with plausible deniability" (Fair et al., 2010). Fourth, such deniability provides even greater freedom to low-level operatives who can execute operations without approval, while high-level leadership is protected from accountability for these operations (Fair et al., 2010).

The ISI's support of militant groups can be traced back to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 (Riedel, 2008). The CIA provided approximately \$6 billion in covert funding, and facilitated the acquisition of weapons by the ISI (Riedel, 2008). The ISI, also supported by Saudi Arabia, "was instrumental in supporting seven Sunni Muslim mujahedeen groups in their jihad against the Soviets, and was the principal conduit of covert US and Saudi funding" (Waldman, 2010). The ISI's role in the anti-Soviet campaign would mark a pivotal point for the organization (Gul, 2010). According to Gul (2010), "The ISI's involvement in the anti-Soviet operation turned it into an overzealous organization that indulged in both domestic politics and foreign affairs."

The contemporary concern of the ISI is its continued support of LeT and the Afghan Taliban. LeT and ISI have shared a long history of cooperation (Riedel, 2009; *Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). LeT is "primarily a Punjabi group...[and] it recruits from the same families and neighborhoods as the Pakistani army and the ISI" (Riedel, 2009). Given the association between the ISI and LeT, it is not surprising the ISI has trained many LeT fighters

(*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). In some cases, ISI members have resigned to join the ranks of LeT (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). Since 9/11, LeT has expanded its mission to include “the fight against America and its allies” (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). To this end, LeT has engaged in “Training collaboration with other [militant] groups of concern to the U.S [that] takes place in primarily the FATA as well as in certain areas of Khyber Pakhtunkwaha” (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*).

LeT is important to Pakistan because of its focus on fighting India on the matter of Kashmir (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). LeT has maintained a long-held belief that “Once Kashmir [is] liberated...it [will] serve as a base of operations to conquer India and restore Muslim rule to the Indian subcontinent” (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Tankel, 2010*). LeT acted on this intent in November 2008 with a terrorist attack in Mumbai (Bergen, 2011). In these attacks, LeT, supported by the ISI, laid siege to two “five star hotels that catered to Westerners in the Muslim world...the Taj and Oberoi” (Bergen, 2011).

The ISI’s support of the Taliban and the Haqqani network runs deeper, and is arguably more troubling, than the ISI’s support of LeT (Waldman, 2010). Evidence suggests the ISI’s vigorous support of the Taliban is linked to Pakistan’s strategic interests relative to India and Kashmir (Waldman, 2010). Driving Pakistan is its concern with India’s current role in Afghanistan (Waldman, 2010). In Afghanistan, “India enjoys close relations with the Karzai administration, has four regional consulates, and is providing substantial reconstruction assistance” (Waldman, 2010). Given India’s presence and aid in Afghanistan, Pakistan fears a strategic loss should U.S. forces withdraw from Afghanistan (Waldman, 2010). As such, ISI support of the Taliban is designed to fuel general instability, and erode any legitimacy held by the Karzai regime (Waldman, 2010). In other words, “The Taliban-ISI relationship is founded on mutual benefit. The Taliban need external sanctuary, as well as military and logistical support to sustain their insurgency; the ISI believes that it needs a significant allied force in Afghanistan to maintain regional strength and ‘strategic depth’ in their rivalry with India” (Waldman, 2010).

The ISI’s pragmatic support of the Taliban is significant. John Jack Rooney (2010) reveals that *Wikileaks* recently “exposed some 180 different reports documenting ISI officials meeting with top [Taliban] commanders, training suicide bombers, providing motorbikes and magnetic mines, and even organizing sophisticated offensives.” Furthermore, there is emerging anecdotal evidence revealing just how embedded the ISI is within the ranks of the Taliban (Waldman, 2010). Waldman’s (2010) research is based on “semi-structured interviews in or near Kabul and Kandahar...with nine insurgent field commanders.” Waldman (2010) concludes, “Interviews strongly suggest that the ISI has representatives on the [Quetta] Shura...and the agency is thus involved at the highest level of the [Taliban] movement.”

The ISI is also suspected of setting guidelines for Taliban’s “conduct and strategy” (Waldman, 2010). Violation of these guidelines is purported to carry the consequence of arrest by the ISI (Waldman, 2010). These arrests are “intended to send a message to both the Taliban and the United States that negotiations could only take place if the ISI had a major role in, if not control over, the negotiating process” (Waldman, 2010). ISI arrests, however, do not

appear to carry permanent consequences (Waldman, 2010). Research by Waldman (2010) revealed unconfirmed reports that Taliban members arrested by the ISI are often released not long after they are incarcerated. In one example, President Zardari is reported to have visited a prison holding 40-50 Taliban prisoners (Waldman, 2010). During his visit, President Zardari is alleged to have addressed these prisoners stating they would be released in two stages: “first, those who are not well known to the media, who would be released shortly, and second, those who are better known, who would be released later in prisoner exchanges” (Waldman, 2010).

The ISI is also reported to provide logistical and strategic support to the Taliban in Afghanistan (Waldman, 2010). The ISI is said to be “operating training camps for Taliban recruits, and facilitating the supply of funds, equipment and arms from Gulf countries” (Waldman, 2010). Furthermore, the ISI coordinates cross-border transit of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, and facilitates sanctuary for Taliban fighters in Pakistan’s FATA (Waldman, 2010).

Similar to the Taliban, the ISI also substantially aids the Haqqani network (Waldman, 2010). The ISI supports the Haqqani network as another means to combat U.S. and allied troops in Afghanistan (Waldman, 2010). The ISI supports the Haqqani network by providing munitions including “AK47 rounds...grenades and IEDs” (Waldman, 2010). The ISI has also reportedly trained members of the Haqqani network in Pakistan’s FATA on military tactics to include “attacks, ambushes, and IEDs” (Waldman, 2010).

## **India and Kashmir Mania**

The rivalry between India and Pakistan is historically underpinned by the territorial dispute over Kashmir (Rashid, 2009). Kashmir was quickly abandoned by British colonial rule in 1947, leaving the territory open for control (Rashid, 2009). At that time, “Kashmiri Muslims wanted Kashmir to join Pakistan” (Rashid, 2009); however, the Hindu population of Kashmir desired to join India (Rashid, 2009). And, other Kashmiri’s promoted the idea of Kashmir as an independent state (Rashid, 2009). The internal dispute over governance led to a revolt by Kashmiri Muslims (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan saw this as an opportunity to gain control of the region, and quickly provided aid to the revolt (Rashid, 2009). India, not to be outdone by Pakistan, also provided military aid to thwart the growing Pakistan supported insurgency (Rashid, 2009). The result divided control of Kashmir, with India holding two-thirds of the region, and Pakistan controlling the remaining third (Rashid, 2009). India and Pakistan agreed to a cease fire in Kashmir on January 1, 1949 (Rashid, 2009). The Kashmir dispute has remained a source of contention between India and Pakistan ever since (Rashid, 2009).

There have three wars between India and Pakistan stemming from the ongoing Kashmir dispute (Rashid, 2009). These wars erupted in 1965, 1971, and 1999 (Rashid, 2009). The war in 1971, “led to a humiliating defeat of the Pakistan army, and the loss of East Pakistan [and] fueled a desire for revenge by Islamabad” (Rashid, 2009). In 1999, Pakistan “secretly deployed troops into Indian Kashmir to occupy mountaintops in the Kargil sector” (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan violated India’s side of the line of control, and India responded violently (Gul, 2010). “Pakistani forces withdrew from Indian positions but not before taking heavy casualties” (Gul, 2010).

Pakistan's initiation of the Kargil War outraged the international community, primarily because it brought two nuclear armed states to the brink of all-out war (Gul, 2010).

Since the Kargil War, Pakistan has adopted a more nuanced approach to Kashmir, by supporting militancy in the region and leveraging LeT as its proxy (Gul, 2010; *Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Tankel, 2010). Pakistan's proxy support has been kept at a level "just below what India might use to justify an attack on Pakistan" (Rashid, 2009). For example, on December 13, 2001, Pakistan was responsible for a car bomb that destroyed the parliament building in Kashmir (Rashid, 2009). And, LeT, supported by the ISI, exacted terror attacks on two hotels in Mumbai (Riedel, 2011).

According to Rashid (2009), "After 9/11 the wars and rivalry between India and Pakistan that had already lasted half a century were to show no signs of abating, despite the fact the two countries were now allied with the United States in its global war on terrorism." The U.S. invasion of Afghanistan opened the door for increasing tensions between the countries of India and Pakistan (Rashid, 2009). Both Pakistan and India viewed the war in Afghanistan "would allow them to carry on an even deadlier rivalry over Kashmir" (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan perceived the Afghan war as a means to "deny India any advantage in Kabul" (Rashid, 2009). To deny this advantage, Pakistan leveraged its military and ISI to support the Afghan Taliban in its efforts to retain control and destabilize the Karzai regime (Rashid, 2009). This also prompted Pakistan to provide refuge for Afghan Taliban fighters in its FATA (Rashid, 2009).

On the other hand, the quick U.S. defeat of the Taliban following the launch of Operation Enduring Freedom created a vacuum that India exploited (Jones, 2009; Rashid, 2009). India adopted several measures to tip the balance of support in Afghanistan to its favor (Rashid, 2009). India "supported Karzai, established a lavish diplomatic presence in Kabul, funded aid programs, and...sent Indian agents to train Baloch and Sindhi dissidents in Pakistan" (Rashid, 2009). The net result was Afghanistan "had suddenly become the new Kashmir" (Rashid, 2009), with both India and Pakistan attempting to gain a self-centered advantage in Afghanistan (Rashid, 2009).

Following 9/11, "India was stunned at how easily and quickly the United States embraced Pakistan as a strategic ally" (Rashid, 2009). India believed the U.S. would be quick to designate Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism (Rashid, 2009). As such, India anticipated Pakistan would be pressured to end its support of terrorism, including support of al Qaeda and militants in Kashmir (Rashid, 2009). India also thought it would be justified in exercising unilateral military action against Pakistan (Rashid, 2009). Conversely, Pakistan assumed the U.S. focus on Afghanistan "would absolve it of reining in the Kashmiri militants" (Rashid, 2009). And, "Now that Pakistan was allied to the United States, and the United States was dependent on Pakistan for conducting the war in Afghanistan, the military believed it could force India to the negotiating table by stepping up attacks" (Rashid, 2009). The misread of the Afghanistan situation by the United States, Afghanistan, and Pakistan created an unanticipated contentious issue that has yet to be fully resolved among these countries (Rashid, 2009).

The India-Pakistan rivalry, combined with the ongoing power struggle of the two countries in Afghanistan, has brought nuclear weapon proliferation by both India and Pakistan into sharp focus (Rashid, 2009). For over fifty years, Pakistan has justified its nuclear weapon proliferation citing its rivalry with nuclear armed India (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan's historical provocation of India, primarily via the Kashmir issue, is cause for concern that an all out war involving a nuclear exchange between the two countries is a viable possibility (Rashid, 2009). More concerning, is al Qaeda or another terrorist organization may acquire a nuclear weapon from Pakistan's stockpile (Riedel, 2011). And, Pakistan has offered up its nuclear technology to North Korea, Iran, and Libya (Riedel, 2011).

### **Policy Considerations for the United States**

Despite all its flaws, Pakistan requires the support of the United States and the international community (Riedel, 2011). The most compelling reason is, that without support, Pakistan may continue its decline and eventually become a "jihadist state" (Riedel, 2011). According to Riedel (2011), "The growing strength of the network of terror in Pakistan raises the serious possibility (but not yet the probability) of a jihadist takeover of the country." Should such a scenario play out, "A jihadist Pakistan would be the most serious threat the United States has faced since the end of the cold war" (Riedel, 2009).

A jihadist controlled Pakistan would pose many severe problems (Riedel, 2011). First, Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons; and, jihadists with access to nuclear weapons would leave no good option for dealing with Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). Second, "Engagement would be impossible: the new leadership in Islamabad would have no faith and little interest in any dialogue with the Crusaders and Zionists" (Riedel, 2011). A jihadist Pakistan would likely make an immediate demand for withdrawal of all U.S. and allied forces from all Muslim lands including Iraq, Afghanistan, and Israel (Riedel, 2011). A jihadists Pakistan would also threaten India with an attack if India did not release full control of Kashmir (Riedel, 2011). Third, the U.S. could not support any political candidate in Pakistan to reverse jihadist control, due to the dwindling popularity of the U.S. in Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). In sum, "a jihadist, nuclear-armed Pakistan is a scenario that must be avoided at all costs. That means working with the Pakistan of today to try to improve its very spotty record on terrorism and proliferation" (Riedel, 2011).

Riedel (2011) and others offer several strategies to aid Pakistan, and prevent the worst-case scenario of jihadist state control. To begin, the U.S. must undertake a concerted effort to reverse the deeply rooted mistrust Pakistan has of the U.S (Riedel, 2011). The U.S. has largely contributed to the held distrust through its inconsistent foreign policies with Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). As such, "American policy toward Pakistan must now be built on the principle of unwavering support for democracy, even if the United States is averse to some policies of Islamabad's democratic governments" (Riedel, 2011). Moreover, the U.S. and Pakistan must engage in "a sustained, broad-based dialogue about [their] entire relationship" (Fair et al., 2010). Because of the military's role in Pakistan politics, supporting democracy will also require an effective strategy with Pakistan's military (Fair et al., 2010). This will require the U.S. to "forge closer relations with the Pakistan military...[and] must persuade it to support civilian control to secure Pakistan's future as a successful and stable state" (Fair et al, 2010).

Terrorism is a dual concern for both Pakistan and the U.S. (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan and the U.S. need to revisit their respective priorities in combating terrorism (Riedel, 2011). One place to start may be the U.S. drone program (Riedel, 2011). The drone program, while successful in killing terrorists, has diminished Pakistani support of U.S. counterterrorism efforts (Riedel, 2011). According to Riedel (2011), many Pakistanis “are deeply angered by the drone operations, which they see as an infringement on their country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.” The drone program also has had a negative impact on Pakistan’s military, as the military “find[s] the drone attacks deeply humiliating since they vividly demonstrate the army’s inability to defend the country” (Riedel, 2011). The drone program is a necessary evil, and has been effective against terrorists in Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). However, Riedel (2011) cautions “it is also essential to avoid becoming drone addicted, using them so indiscriminately as to make them counterproductive” (Riedel, 2011).

The U.S. also needs to engage Pakistan’s government in “a manner that strengthens Pakistan’s civilian-elected leadership” (Riedel, 2011). To this end, “U.S. assistance should be used to train Pakistan’s political parties, including elected officials and party workers, to help them learn how to operate more effectively” (Fair et al., 2011). Given the political power of Pakistan’s military, it has the ability to undermine the democratic process (Riedel, 2011). To avert this subjugation, the U.S. needs to develop “strong military-to-military and intelligence-to-intelligence networks” (Riedel, 2011). Under this construct, the U.S. should provide training to the military, foster communicative networks, and provide training for conducting counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations (Fair, et al., 2010).

Given Pakistan’s duplicitous role on supporting terrorism and counterterrorism, there must exist clearly articulated and understood activities that will not be tolerated (Riedel, 2011). First, Pakistan can no longer provide safe haven for terrorist organizations, such as al Qaeda, the Taliban, and the Haqqani Network (Riedel, 2011). Second, Pakistan can no longer support LeT, or use this organization as its terror proxy (Riedel, 2011). Third, transparency must occur across all strata with both the U.S. and Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). As Nawaz (2011) poignantly notes, “we need to work with Pakistan with respect for an ally, but be consistent in our exchanges and interactions so there is no disconnect between what we say and do” (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, 2011).

India must also enter the realm of U.S. policy toward Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). Riedel (2011) suggests, “Pakistan, India, and Afghanistan should be part of one executive bureau across the U.S. government.” The U.S. must broker a dialogue between Pakistan and India, and encourage them to settle their historical differences (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). According to Nawaz (2011), “The largest single potential for improving Pakistan’s security and economy both is the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan” (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Nawaz, 2011). Peace with India would alleviate Pakistan’s strategic concerns relative to Afghanistan (Tellis, 2007). As such, Pakistan must then be required to support Afghanistan and the Karzai regime; and, Pakistan must end its support of the Taliban and their destabilization efforts in Afghanistan (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Kagan, 2011; Tellis, 2007).

U.S. policy must help Pakistan build economic and military capability (Riedel, 2011). Riedel (2011) argues Pakistan “needs its own drones, equipped with intelligence collection and weapons systems.” Providing drones may help alleviate distrust exacerbated by the U.S. drone program (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan is also in desperate need of helicopters to combat insurgents and militants (Riedel, 2011). On the economic side, the U.S. should enact a free trade agreement with Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). “Trade not aid” (Riedel, 2011) would go far in helping Pakistan’s struggling economy (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan also requires improved energy infrastructure, which could be achieved with hydropower (Riedel, 2011; *Threat to U.S. Homeland, Nawaz, 2011*). And, improvements in Pakistan’s education system would bolster its economic outlook, and diminish the promulgation of jihadist teachings (Riedel, 2011). Illiteracy rates run high in Pakistan, and schools are indoctrination centers “that teach hate” (Riedel, 2011).

Finally, U.S. policy with respect to Pakistan must include nuclear proliferation (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan “today has the fastest growing nuclear arsenal in the world, with no constraints on its development other than technology and resources” (Riedel, 2011). And, Pakistan “values nuclear weapons because they deter India” (Fair, et al., 2011). Progress in peace with India, and settlement of the Kashmir territorial dispute, should serve to mitigate proliferation (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan must also be prohibited with sharing nuclear technology with other countries, and in protecting its nuclear arsenal from falling into the hands of terrorists (Fair et al., 2010). In sum, “Pakistan must be brought into a system that imposes at least some constraints on its arsenal and provides some incentive for it to cap [its] growth” (Riedel, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

The case of Pakistan is troublesome. Almost immediately after 9/11, Pakistan emerged as an ally in the U.S.’ mission to eliminate al Qaeda - the terrorist organization responsible for the 9/11 attacks (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan cooperated with the U.S. by providing access to its airspace, opening terrestrial routes into Afghanistan, and in hunting down al Qaeda militants in its FATA (Fair et al., 2010). In return for its support, the U.S. has provided Pakistan with billions in aid.

However, since 9/11 Pakistan has also supported a number of militant groups including the LeT, the Haqqani Network, and the Afghan Taliban (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Kagan, 2011*). Pakistan has leveraged its ISI to push its strategic interests by proxy in Afghanistan and Kashmir (Waldman, 2010). Pakistan uses its ISI to constantly poke India, hoping not provoke an all out war between the two; and, the ISI is deeply embedded in the Afghan Taliban, using its influence to thwart stability in Afghanistan out of fear of losing the country’s strategic value relative to India. Additionally, Pakistan’s FATA has become host to a variety of militant groups (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan’s double-game has not served it well, and has only resulted in increasing instability (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, Kagan, 2011*). In fact, many agree that Pakistan is now the locus of global terror (Riedel, 2011; (*Threat to U.S. Homeland, 2011*)).

Contributing to Pakistan’s insecurity are several other factors. These include the constant fluctuation in governance between civilian and military power structures (Fair et al., 2010); failure to extend governance to its FATA (Rashid, 2009); and, declining socio-economic

conditions that promote disaffection among the masses (Fair et al., 2010). Pakistan's FATA is particularly worrisome, because its lawlessness has attracted militant groups in a myriad of varieties (Rashid, 2009). Pakistan contributes to regional and global insecurity through uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear weapons (Riedel, 2011). Proliferation keeps India uneasy, and the rest of the international community concerned because it has shared this technology with Iran, North Korea, and Libya (Riedel, 2011).

A worst case scenario for the U.S. is a jihadist run Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). As such, despite its defects, Pakistan must be engaged consistently by the U.S. to prevent this scenario, and to mitigate its devolving insecurity (Tellis, 2007). To accomplish this, the U.S. must change its approach with Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). The U.S. must begin by building trust with Pakistan (Riedel, 2011). The U.S. needs to promote democracy and support Pakistan's civilian leadership (Fair et al., 2010; Riedel, 2011). The U.S. and Pakistan must also engage in a steady dialogue about all facets of their relationship including "the good, the bad, and the ugly" (*Threat to U.S. Homeland*, Kagan, 2011). And, both U.S. and Pakistan's militaries need to foster networks of cooperation (Fair et al., 2010; Riedel, 2009). On the economic front, the U.S. should broker a free-trade agreement with Pakistan, and work in other ways to strengthen its economy and education components (Riedel, 2011).

Pakistan also needs to exert effort to change its course. Pakistan can no longer afford to provide safe haven for militant groups (Riedel, 2011). Furthermore, Pakistan must gain control of its ISI, which has a long history of supporting LeT and the Afghan Taliban (Riedel, 2011). And, Pakistan must be made clearly aware of behaviors that will not be tolerated, such as supporting terrorist proxies, and continuing to use violence in Kashmir (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan should also be open to engagement with India, brokered by the U.S., in an attempt to bring accord to the ongoing contention over Kashmir (Riedel, 2011). Pakistan could promote peace with India by scaling its nuclear proliferation (Riedel, 2011). And, peace with India would go far in providing stability in Afghanistan and to the region.

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